

REMARKS

A telephonic interview was conducted with Examiner Alexander G. Ghyka on January 23, 2006 to discuss amending claims 2, 4 and 19 to change the step "using an inert gas containing at least an ammonia gas" to "using an ammonia gas" so that the claims correspond to the specification and recite the method for manufacturing a semiconductor device for which the specification provides literal antecedent basis.

It was pointed out to Examiner Ghyka during the telephonic interview that there is no description in the specification of using, during the nitriding step, any type of carrier gas (e.g., an inert gas) containing an ammonia gas, as recited in claims 2, 4 and 19. More specifically, page 4, lines 16-17 of the specification describes that, as an example, "an ammonia gas" is used for nitriding.

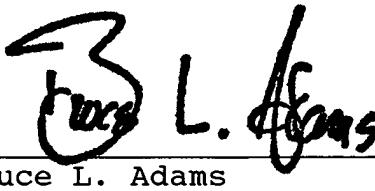
Thus, amendment of claims 2, 4 and 19 to change the step "using an inert gas containing at least an ammonia gas" to "using an ammonia gas" is believed to conform the claims to the written description in the specification.

During the telephone interview, the Examiner advised that he would approve the foregoing proposed amendments to claims 2, 4 and 19 to correspond and conform to the written description in the specification.

In view of the foregoing discussion, favorable reconsideration and entry of this amendment are most respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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MAILING CERTIFICATE

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January 24, 2006

Date